DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 171 UD 033 773

AUTHOR	Orfield, Gary; Yun, John T.
TITLE	Resegregation in American Schools.
INSTITUTION	Harvard Univ., Cambridge, MA.
SPONS AGENCY	John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago, IL.; Ford Foundation, New York, NY.; Mott (C.S.) Foundation, Flint, MI.; Spencer Foundation, Chicago, IL.
PUB DATE	1999-06-00
NOTE	37p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Civil Rights Project Harvard University, 444 Guttman Library, 6 Appian Way, Cambridge, MA 02138 ($10.00). Tel: 617-496-6367; Tel: 617-495-9139; Fax: 617-496-3095; e-mail: crp@harvard.edu; Web site: www.law.harvard.edu/civilrights.
PUB TYPE	Numerical/Quantitative Data (110) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Black Students; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; *Hispanic American Students; Minority Groups; *Racial Composition; *School Resegregation; Suburban Schools; Trend Analysis; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	African Americans; *Latinos

ABSTRACT

This report focuses on four important trends. The first is that the U.S. South is resegregating after two and a half decades of increasing integration. The second is that the data show continuously increasing segregation for Latino students, who are rapidly becoming the largest minority group in the United States and who have been more segregated than African American students for several years. The third trend is evidenced in the large and increasing numbers of African American and Latino students enrolled in suburban schools, where segregation is increasing. The fourth trend is a rapid ongoing change in the racial composition of U.S. schools and the emergence of many schools with three or more racial groups. The report shows that all racial groups except Whites experience considerable diversity in their schools, but Whites are remaining in overwhelmingly White schools even in regions with very large non-White enrollments. Data are from a variety of sources. The report also documents national trends in enrollment and segregation for African American, Latino, White, and Asian students by region, state, and community type. (Contains 22 tables and 4 figures.) (SLD)

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Resegregation in American Schools

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June 1999

The Civil Rights Project

Harvard University

UD033773

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Civil Rights Project would like to thank the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and an anonymous donor for their generous support. The 1996-1997 Common Core of Data is taken from the Common Core of Data Longitudinal Research File (School File). Some tables derive from work in collaboration with J. Michael Ross of the NCES staff and Donald McLaughlin of the American Institutes for Research, in preparation of a new indicator for the forthcoming edition of the *Condition of Education, 1999*. That indicator can be found on the web site of the NCES. We have benefited greatly from that collaboration. This report, however, is our own interpretation of those and other data. We also appreciate the editorial assistance of Susan Eaton.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY : TRENDS OF SEGREGATION

This report focuses primarily upon four important trends. First, the American South is resegregating, after two and a half decades in which civil rights law broke the tradition of apartheid in the region's schools and made it the section of the country with the highest levels of integration in its schools. Second, the data shows continuously increasing segregation for Latino students, who are rapidly becoming our largest minority group and have been more segregated than African Americans for several years. Third, the report shows large and increasing numbers of African American and Latino students enrolled in suburban schools, but serious segregation within these communities, particularly in the nation's large metropolitan areas. Since trends suggest that we will face a vast increase in suburban diversity, this raises challenges for thousands of communities. Fourth, we report a rapid ongoing change in the racial composition of American schools and the emergence of many schools with three or more racial groups. The report shows that all racial groups except whites experience considerable diversity in their schools but whites are remaining in overwhelmingly white schools even in regions with very large non-white enrollments.

Though we usually think of segregation in racial and ethnic terms, it's important to also realize that the spreading segregation has a strong class component. When African-American and Latino students are segregated into schools where the majority of students are non-white, they are very likely to find themselves in schools where poverty is concentrated. This is of course not the case with segregated white students, whose majority-white schools almost always enroll high proportions of students from the middle class. This is a crucial difference, because concentrated poverty is linked to lower educational achievement. School level poverty is related to many variables that effect a school's overall chance at successfully educating students, including parent education levels, availability of advanced courses, teachers with credentials in the subject they are teaching, instability of enrollment, dropouts, untreated health problems, lower college-going rates and many other important factors. The nation's large program of compensatory education, Title I, has had great difficulty achieving gains in schools where poverty is highly concentrated. When school districts return to neighborhood schools, white students tend to sit next to middle class students but black and Latino students are likely to be next to impoverished students.

Therefore, while debates over the exact academic impact of desegregation continue, there is no question that black and Latino students in racially integrated schools are generally in schools with higher levels of average academic achievement than are their counterparts in segregated schools. Desegregation does not assure that students will receive the better opportunities in those schools—that depends on how the interracial school is run—but it does usually put minority students in schools which have better opportunities and better prepared peer groups. In a period in which mandatory state tests for graduation are being imposed, college admissions standards are rising, remedial courses in college are being cut back, and affirmative action has already been abolished in our two largest states, the harmful consequences for students attending less competitive schools are steadily increasing.

We are clearly in a period when many policymakers, courts, and opinion makers assume that desegregation is no longer necessary, or that it will be accomplished somehow without need of any deliberate plan. Polls show that most white Americans believe that equal educational opportunity is being provided. National political leaders have largely ignored the growth of segregation in the 1990s. Thus, knowledge of trends in segregation and its closely related inequalities are even more crucial now. For example, increased testing requirements for high

school graduation, for passing from one grade to the next, and college entrance can only be fair if we offer equal preparation to children, regardless of skin color and language. Increasing segregation, however, pushes us in the opposite direction because it creates more unequal schools, particularly for low income minority children, who are the groups which most frequently receive low test scores. Educational policy decisions that do not take these realities into account will end up punishing students in inferior segregated schools, or even sending more children to such schools while simultaneously raising sanctions for those who do not achieve at a sufficiently high level.

In addition to its focus upon the trends of Southern resegregation, Latino student segregation and suburban segregation, this report documents basic national trends in enrollment and segregation for African-American students, Latinos, White and Asian students by region, by state, by community type – allowing comparison across the country. In the final section, we offer recommendations on how to reverse the trend of rising segregation, concluding that there has been very little national leadership on this issue for the past quarter century, recalling the positive steps taken in the 1960s and 1970s, and suggesting a number of steps that would support successful desegregated schools.

INTRODUCTION

As this century nears its end, we are a decade into the resegregation of our nation's schools. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the great black sociologist, W.E.B. DuBois, said that "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line." In the middle of this century the Supreme Court directly challenged the color line in American schools and began decades of political and legal struggle over access for minority students to integrated schools. For several decades it appeared that a permanent turning point had been reached for African American students as the South became the nation's most desegregated region even through the Reagan administration's efforts to end court orders, desegregation continued to increase. By the 1990s things began to turn back.

As the new century approaches we have become a far more racially and ethnically mixed nation, but in our schools, the color lines of increasing racial and ethnic separation are rising. There have not been any significant political or legal initiative to offset this trend for a quarter century. Although the Clinton Administration has seen the largest increases in segregation in the last half century, it has proposed no policies to offset the trend and has not included the issue among its priorities for education policy. Secretary Richard Riley's recent speech on the 45th anniversary of the *Brown* case praised the great decision but said nothing about the increasing turn toward segregation. Most important, the Supreme Court, which opened the possibility of desegregated education in the 1950s has taken decisive steps to end desegregation plans in the 1990s and some lower courts are prohibiting even voluntary local plans.

It has been 45 years since *Brown v. Board of Education* outlawed intentional segregation in the south, but a series of Supreme Court decisions in the 1990s helped push the country away from *Brown*'s celebrated ideals and closer to the old idea of "separate but equal." Separate but equal was a concept articulated in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision that justified laws segregating schools and other institutions. Separate but equal was overturned six decades later by *Brown*'s declaration that separate schools were inherently unequal. When the Supreme Court prohibited discrimination by state law in the 1950s, it called for only gradual change with "all deliberate speed" supervised by conservative Southern federal courts. During the next thirty years, however, the law developed in a series of decisions to require immediate and complete desegregation in states with a history of official discrimination, even when busing was required to overcome residential segregation. In 1973, the Supreme Court in a case from Denver, *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, extended desegregation requirements to Northern and Western cities with a history of local policies that fostered but did not directly require segregation. This case also recognized the right of Latino as well as African American students to desegregated education.

But the expansion of desegregation rights ended 25 years ago, with the Supreme Court's decision in *Milliken v. Bradley,* which would have desegregated students from the largely minority city schools with suburban students in metropolitan Detroit. This rule was made in spite of findings of intentional discrimination by both state and local officials, which intensified segregation in the metropolitan area. Since many big cities, like Detroit, had rapidly declining white minorities in their schools, this meant that the large metropolitan areas with many separate suburban school districts would lead the nation in segregation, which they continue to do today. In the second Detroit case, *Milliken v. Bradley II,* the Supreme Court seemed to offer a new version of separate but equal when it authorized federal courts to order money for programs in segregated schools to make up for the history of discrimination.

In the 1990s, a Supreme Court reconstructed by the appointees of Presidents Reagan and Bush handed down three very important decisions limiting desegregation rights and triggering a flood of lawsuits designed to end desegregation in major U.S. districts. In the 1991 *Dowell* case the Court held that desegregation orders were temporary and that school boards could return to segregated neighborhood schools. The next year, in the *Freeman v. Pitts* decision the Court authorized piecemeal dismantling of desegregation plans. Finally, in the *Jenkins* case in 1995 the Court rejected the effort of a lower court to maintain the desegregation and magnet school remedy in the Kansas City case until it produced actual benefits for African American students, thus drastically limiting the reach of the separate but equal promise of *Milliken II*. According to the Supreme Court, the courts could order payments only for several years, and could not require that the programs produce measurable gains for the students subjected to a history of discrimination.

After the termination of court orders, under these recent decisions, the school districts would be declared "unitary" and free of all taint of discrimination. Once that happened, school boards were free to make decisions that had the effect of creating unequal opportunities for minority students unless civil rights lawyers could prove that they had intended to discriminate, a standard that is virtually impossible to meet. In addition, once a district is unitary, individual white parents can sue to try to prevent any conscious effort to maintain desegregation in any school, claiming that it discriminates against whites. Though the Supreme Court has not yet spoken on this issue, lower courts have ordered the end to special provisions to maintain interracial magnet schools in a number of districts. Some districts, like Boston, that bitterly fought desegregation for years, have now been forbidden to take voluntary steps under this doctrine. Many major school districts are in the process of phasing out their desegregation plans, so the trends reported in this study will surely accelerate in the next few years. Among school districts recently ending or phasing our their desegregation plans are Buffalo, NY; Broward County (Fort Lauderdale) FL; Clark County (Las Vegas) NV; Nashville-Davidson County; TN, Duval County (Jacksonville) FL; Mobile, AL; Minneapolis, MN; Cleveland, OH; San Jose, CA; Seattle, WA; and Wilmington, DE. A number of other major districts are now in litigation over the issue, with some of them struggling to be permitted to continue their desegregation plans.

Plessy permitted generations of unequal education and prompted decades of legal struggle against it. The resegregation decisions of our present period may well have a similar impact on the next century since there is considerable evidence that the resegregated schools of the nineties are profoundly unequal.

DATA IN THE REPORT

This study will examine changes in the racial composition of American schools, national patterns of segregation, the relationship between segregation by race and schools experiencing concentrated poverty, the difference in segregation in different regions and types of school districts, and the segregation of multiracial schools. For both African American and Latino students, the study reports differences in segregation by region and state and the most segregated states. The report concludes with a discussion of policies that could help reverse the trends toward intensifying segregation. The key data is reported in the following tables and figures:

- national changes in enrollment by race and ethnicity (tables 1-5, 7)
- broad national trends of segregation (tables 6, 8-11; figures 1-4)
- relationship between segregation by race and poverty (tables 12, 13, 14)

- segregation by size of community (table 22)
- multiracial schools and multiracial exposure for students of each race (table 11)
- state and regional Latino trends (tables 19-21)
- state and regional African American trends (tables 15-18)
- levels of integration for whites (tables 6, 11)

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

American schools are changing rapidly. The changes are the result of several factors including: the surge of non-European immigration since the 1965 law ending discriminatory immigration laws, the low birth rate among native whites, and much larger families among Latinos, who are the youngest population group. The steady rise in the proportion of minority children in our communities and their schools is not caused by white flight from public schools. In 1996, 11% of U.S. students were in private schools, compared to 12% a half century earlier, before *Brown*, and 15% in the mid-1960s, just before significant desegregation began.[1]

Since the beginning of the civil rights era the proportion of Hispanics in the nation's public school population has more than tripled. Census statistics for the 1940 to 1960 period show that non-white students totaled only 11 - 12% of the total enrollment.[2] By 1996, the non-white enrollment was 36% and the Census Bureau projected that the total school age population would reach 58% non-white by 2050. Since the Office for Civil Rights of the Education Department[3] began collecting national school data in 1968, the enrollment of Hispanics has increased by 218% while African Americans have grown more than a fifth and the white enrollment is down by a sixth (table 1). In the 1996-97 school year, the African American enrollment was 16.9% of the total enrollment and the Latino enrollment accounted for 14% (table 2).

The public schools of the U.S. foreshadow the dramatic transformation of American society that will occur in the next generation. We are a society in which the school age population is much more diverse than the older population. The social reality in our schools is far removed from the reality in our politics, since voters are older and much more likely to be white. When the modern school desegregation battles took shape in the 1950s, the issue was often described as the problem of opening up a white school system to the one-tenth of students who were black. Latino students received very little attention nationally and Asian students were a virtually invisible minority in a society that had prohibited Asian immigration for many decades. Today, Asians are nearly 4% of all students, and on a path to become one-tenth of the school population in mid-century, if existing trends continue. For the first time we have a large racial group whose average achievement scores and family incomes exceed those of whites, requiring us to rethink some of the assumptions about who benefits from desegregating with whom.

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[1] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 1997*: 12 (projected data for 1996).

[2] U.S. Bureau of the Census, The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States: An Historical View, 1790-1978, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1979: 88. Although the Census uses a data system which reflects the fact that "Latino" is not a racial category and counts millions of residents who are Latino and white, school statistics are collected in mutually exclusive categories, so the term "white" should be understood as "non-Latino white ." Thus, the term non-white, is the total minority population—the total population minus the non-Hispanic whites. Though this term is awkward, it is better than the principal alternative, "minority students," since these students are already the majority in many cities and will be the majority nationally in another generation.

[3] The Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare until the Education Department was created in 1980.

Table 1
Public School Enrollment Changes, 1968-1996 (In Millions)

	1968	1980	1994	1996	Change 1968-1996
Hispanics	2.00	3.18	5.57	6.36	+4.36 (218%)
Anglos	34.70	29.16	28.46	28.99	- 5.71 (-16%)
Blacks	6.28	6.42	7.13	7.68	+1.40 (22 %)

Source: DBS Corp., 1982, 1987; Gary Orfield, Rosemary George, and Amy Orfield, "Racial Change in U.S. School Enrollments, 1968-84," paper presented at National Conference on School Desegregation, University of Chicago, 1968, OCR data for 1980, NCES Common Core of Education Data for 1994 and 1996.

Table 2
Regular Public School Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 1996-97

Region*	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian/ Pacific	% Indian/ Alaskan
South(4)	13,774,991	56.4	27.4	14.0	1.8	0.4
Border(5)	3,456,936	73.4	19.7	2.3	1.6	2.9
Northeast(3)	8,005,516	69.2	15.3	11.4	3.9	0.3
Midwest(2)	9,669,967	78.6	13.7	4.7	2.0	1.0
West(1)**	10,192,070	54.4	6.5	29.3	7.6	2.2
Alaska	129,919	63.1	4.7	2.9	4.5	24.8
Hawaii	188,554	20.5	2.5	7.4	69.3	0.4
U.S. Total***	45,417,953	64.1	16.9	14.0	3.8	1.2

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data

We already have five states where the majority of all public school students are from "minority" backgrounds and these include our two largest and most influential states, California and Texas, which have produced four of the last six candidates elected President. In California, the Latino student body already slightly exceeds the white total in a state where one in nine students is of Asian origin, and one in eleven is black. The state has many schools where the integration is primarily between Latinos and Asians. Asians are far more likely than whites to be eligible for admission to the University of California system. The fact that African Americans are the second largest minority in Texas and the third largest in California is another sign of the need for a more complex way of thinking about segregation that takes multiracial schools into account (table 3).

Table 3
Public School Enrollments in Majority Non-White States by Race/Ethnicity, 1996-97

State*	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian/ Pacific	% Indian/ Alaskan
California	5,614,061	39.5	8.7	39.7	11.2	0.9
Hawaii	188,554	20.5	2.5	7.4	69.3	0.4
Mississippi	506,748	47.7	50.9	0.4	0.6	0.5
New Mexico	330,333	38.7	2.4	47.5	1.0	10.5
Texas	3,828,975	45.6	14.3	37.4	2.4	0.3

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data

Our largest city school systems now serve only a tiny minority of white students, but are extremely important for minority students. If we examine the largest big city school districts in 1996-97 we can see that in most of the largest districts several have 85% or more non-white enrollments and serve virtually no middle class white families. Very few have more than one-third whites. One of the very serious problems facing education policy makers is that these school systems which are crucial for many millions of minority students, and face the most severe segregation by race and poverty, are of very little personal importance to the white population. Much of our recent school politics turns on various theories of why these schools are inferior and have not responded well to the reforms of the last generation. The core issues of racial and economic segregation are rarely mentioned in those political debates.[4]

Table 4
Enrollment of the Largest Central City School Districts by Race & Ethnicity, 1996-97

City	Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian
New York	1,062,016	16.1	36.1	37.3	10.0
Los Angeles	667,305	11.0	14.0	68.0	6.7
Chicago	421,334	10.5	54.1	32.1	3.2
Miami-Dade	341,090	13.5	33.6	51.5	1.3
Philadelphia	212,150	19.8	64.0	11.6	4.7
Houston	209,375	11.1	34.3	51.8	2.8
Detroit	187,590	5.2	90.1	2.8	1.0
Dallas	154,847	11.0	41.5	45.5	1.7
San Diego	133,687	29.3	16.9	34.4	18.7
Memphis	111,140	15.1	86.6	0.7	1.4
Baltimore	108,759	13.4	85.1	0.4	0.5
Milwaukee	101,007	22.2	60.1	12.5	3.6
Albuquerque	88,886	44.2	3.6	46.2	1.8
New Orleans	85,064	5.5	90.7	1.3	2.5
Washington, D.C.	78,553	3.9	87.3	7.2	1.4
Fresno	78,470	22.8	11.1	43.6	21.7
Austin	76,054	37.7	18.0	41.7	2.2
Fort Worth	75,813	25.9	33.2	38.4	2.3
Cleveland	74,026	20.6	70.4	7.7	1.0

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data and computations by Harvard Projection on School Desegregation

In terms of its total enrollment, the country by 1996 had two regions, the West and the South, where close to half the students were non-white and three regions, the Northeast, the Midwest, and the Border states, where there were large majorities of white students. All regions showed a decline in the percentages of whites in the student population but the change was by far the fastest in the West.

Change was the slowest in the whitest region, the Midwest, which has two of the nation's most segregated areas, metropolitan Chicago and metropolitan Detroit. In all parts of the

[4] The national study of the largest federal school aid program, the Title I compensatory education program, noted that children in concentrated poverty schools receiving special aid actually performed better than those in less concentrated schools with no program. The Administration responded to that finding by recommending more dollars for isolated schools and there was no discussion of possible strategies for lowering the intensity of the isolation (*Prospects—the Congressionally Mandated Study of Title I*).

country, there would be less contact with whites even if there were full desegregation because there is a slowing declining percentage of school age whites. This explanation for increasing segregation is most relevant in the West where the decline in the percentage of white students far outstripped the other regions between 1987 and 1996. Table 5 shows an 8.9% reduction of white enrollment in the West compared to a ~4.5% reduction in all other regions. This trend –a 1% decrease in white enrollment each year – could result in the West becoming the first region to have a white minority in its public schools by the year 2001.

Table 5: Percentage of White Students Enrolled, by Year and Region.

	South	Border	Northeast	Midwest	West
1987	60.8	77.4	73.8	81.6	63.3
1996	56.4	73.4	69.2	78.6	54.4
Change	-4.4	-4.0	-4.6	-3.0	-8.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Common Core of Data Longitudinal Research File (School File)

Historically, the South has always had the highest proportion of black students. The South (the eleven states of the old Confederacy) is the nation's most populous region, with 13.7 million students, of whom 27.4% are black. The six Border states and the District of Columbia, which also mandated racial segregation until 1954, have 19.7% black students. The regions with the lowest proportions of black students are the West with 6.5% and the Midwest with 13.7%. Since the proportion of blacks to whites is highest in the South, and the integration effort has been more intense, in the South, the amount of contact whites have with blacks is considerably higher than elsewhere the U.S. Examining the list of states where whites have the highest contact with non-whites in their schools, one finds that they are all in the formerly *de jure* segregated states. The only state outside the South on this list is Delaware, which also had *de jure* segregation and was one of the only states ordered to desegregate across city-suburban boundary lines. Although there has been a great deal of criticism of excessive integration elsewhere, none of the northern states had white children in schools with an average of even one-sixth combined black and Latino children (table 6). During the civil rights era, southern whites often complained that northerners were unwilling to desegregate their own communities. That proved to be true.

The white proportion of student enrollment is dropping rapidly in some areas, suggesting that white students should be coming into contact with more minority students. Yet white segregation remains very high. Although the nation's two largest states, California and Texas, have a majority of non-white students, neither shows high levels of integration for white students.

Table 6
States with Highest proportion of Non-white Students in School of Average White Student, 1996-97

	% Blacks and Latinos in Schools of Typical White
Washington, D.C.	35.3
South Carolina	29.9
Mississippi	29.5
Delaware	27.9
Louisiana	26.5
North Carolina	22.8
Georgia	21.6
Alabama	18.6
Virginia	18.0
Florida	17.2

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

The huge growth of Latino enrollment is concentrated in a few states. A substantial majority of all Latinos in the country attend school in the nation's two largest states, California and Texas, which have 3.7 million of the 6.4 million Latino pupils, 58% of the total (table 7).

Table 7
Growth of Latino Enrollments, 1970-96 in States with More than 100,000 Latino students in 1996

			Change 1970-96	
	1970	1996	Enrolment Change	Percent Change
California	706,900	2,230,284	1,523,384	215.5
Texas	565,900	1,432,546	866,646	153.1
New York	316,600	500,936	184,336	58.2
Florida	65,700	356,985	291,285	443.4
Illinois	78,100	252,670	174,570	223.5
Arizona	85,500	240,147	154,647	180.9
New Jersey	59,100	169,317	110,217	186.5
New Mexico	109,300	156,928	47,628	43.6

Source: DBS Corp.,1982;1987;1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

SCHOOL SEGREGATION LEVELS: THE SOUTH AND THE NATION

Forty-five years after the Supreme Court outlawed segregation in southern schools, we are past the high point of desegregation and a decade into the resegregation of public schools. The most important trends in this report are the accelerating resegregation of the South and the continuation of a long and relentless march toward even more severe segregation for Latino students as they become our largest minority. The study also shows large enrollments of African American and Latino students in the suburbs and serious suburban segregation, particularly in the nation's large metropolitan areas. The segregation that is spreading in the nation is not just segregation by race. Segregated African American and Latino schools are many times more likely than white schools to face concentrated poverty, which is powerfully related to lower educational results.

The South Turns Back to Segregation

The South has always been the heartland of African Americans, home to a majority of blacks, it had the most integrated schools in the U.S. for more than a quarter century. The civil rights movement was mostly a struggle about the seventeen southern and border[5] states with apartheid laws. The courts required a much higher standard of proof to obtain desegregation outside the South and never developed a workable remedy for the large metropolitan areas of the North. Some of the most desegregated southern states are now moving rapidly backward.

Forty-five years ago, in 1954, the Supreme Court responded to the history of discrimination in the seventeen states that mandated segregation in an eloquent ruling. The Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision held that denial of access to equal public education violated the basic rights of students and that segregation must end. Nearly ninety years after the Civil War and sixty years after *Plessy v. Ferguson*, seventeen states and Washington, D.C. still had official and total racial segregation of their public schools. The Court held that such segregation was "inherently unequal" and caused irreversible harm. This was probably the most important Supreme Court decision of the twentieth century, bringing back to life the anti-discrimination amendments to the Constitution enacted during Reconstruction, and creating a new sense of possibilities in the country about ending the apartheid that had shaped the lives of most blacks. "Separate but equal" had been tried for a century and failed, producing a momentum of growing educational inequality. *Brown* demanded a new start.

The Supreme Court put off its decision about how to enforce *Brown* until 1955 and then called for gradual change "with all deliberate speed." When Southern states refused to comply, it became necessary to sue each individual district. The district courts ordered very gradual implementation of limited "freedom of choice" plans which left the black schools segregated and permitted a few African American children to attend white schools. Ninety-eight percent of Southern black children were still in totally segregated schools in 1964. The great progress in desegregation came from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, after the enactment of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and following a series of Supreme Court decisions tightening requirements, ending delay, and authorizing busing. Slow progress continued through much of the 1960s. By 1970, the enforcement of the 1964 civil rights act by the Johnson Administration and the courts had made the South the nation's most integrated region for both blacks and whites. The integration was deep and durable, in spite of major policy changes ending enforcement of desegregation by the executive branch.

After nearly a quarter century of increasing integration, the tide turned in the other way in the late 1980s. That process of resegregation has continued through the 1996-97 school year. The percent of black students in majority white schools in the South fell from a peak of 43.5% down to 34.7% in 1996, a clear and consistent eight year decline (table 8), with integration falling below the level achieved 24 years earlier, in 1972.

[5] In this report the South refers to the 11 states of the old Confederacy and the Border states are the six slave states—Oklahoma, Missouri, Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware that stayed with the Union but enforced segregation laws until after the *Brown* decision. In these tabulations, the District of Columbia is included in the Border states.

Table 8
Change in Black Segregation in the South,* 1954-96

Percent of Black Students in Majority White Schools	
1954	.001
1960	.1
1964	2.3
1967	13.9
1968	23.4
1970	33.1
1972	36.4
1976	37.6
1980	37.1
1986	42.9
1988	43.5
1991	39.2
1994	36.6
1996	34.7

Source: DBS Corp., 1982; 1987; 1991-92 NCES Common Core of Data Public Education Agency Universe; 1994-95 NCES Common Core of Data School Universe; 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.

The basic patterns of segregation in the history of the last half century in the South are a very gradual beginnings of desegregation for black students in the 1950s, a dramatic breakthrough from the middle 1960s through the busing decisions of the early 1970s, a continued increase in interracial contact through several administrations attacking urban desegregation plans, followed by an accelerating process of resegregation since the late 1980s (figure 1). During the entire period of rapid increase in desegregation, the Supreme Court had limited its attention to the states with segregation laws, the 17 Southern and Border states.

Commenting on earlier reports of reversals of desegregation, some observers have concluded that the Supreme Court's effort was futile and that things are worse off than they were before 1954. Although the current trend is moving toward higher levels of segregation, that conclusion is wholly unwarranted. When the Supreme Court acted, there was virtually total segregation across a vast region. In the 1996-97 school year, the South is still the nation's most integrated region. (For those who despair in looking at black educational problems today, it is also important to observe that since the early 1950s, the black high school graduation rate has tripled across the U.S.) In spite of the serious reverses reported here, there is no doubt that a great deal was achieved by desegregation and other education reforms, and that the largest gains often came for African American students in the South. Nothing here suggests a return to the absolute segregation that prevailed in the South in 1950, but Southern black students are likely to experience less and less contact with whites.

National Trends

The national trends have parallels with the Southern trends. American schools continue the pattern of increasing racial segregation for black and Latino students. The percent of black students in majority white schools peaked in the early 1980s and declined to the levels of the 1960s by the 1996-97 school year. In terms of intense segregation, this number has turned up only in the more recent past and the increase has been modest (table 8). Latino segregation by

both measures has grown steadily throughout the past 28 years, surpassing the black level in predominantly non-white schools by 1980 and slightly exceeding the proportion in intensely segregated schools (90-100% minority) in the 1990s. Residential segregation has been substantially lower for Latinos than for blacks but the school segregation statistics show that the next generation of Latinos are experiencing significantly less contact with non-Latino whites; 45% of Latinos were in majority white schools in 1968 but only 25% in 1996 (table 9).

Table 9
Percentage of U.S. Black and Latino Students in Predominantly Minority and 90-100% Minority Schools, 1968-96

	50-100% Minority		90-100% Minority	
	Blacks	**Latinos**	**Blacks**	**Latinos**
1968-69	76.6	54.8	64.3	23.1
1972-73	63.6	56.6	38.7	23.3
1980-81	62.9	68.1	33.2	28.8
1986-87	63.3	71.5	32.5	32.2
1991-92	66.0	73.4	33.9	34.0
1996-97	68.8	74.8	35.0	35.4

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, *Public School Desegregation in the United States*, 1968-1980, tables 1 and 10; 1991-92 and 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data.

Another measure of these trends is the exposure index, which shows that the average Latino student attended a school with 43.8% whites in 1970, but the number is down sharply to 29.9% in the new data. Blacks, on the other hand, are back to where they were in the early 1970s, after experiencing more interracial schools in the 1980s (table 10). We do not have national segregation statistics for African Americans from the 1950s because the data was not collected in the North. Given the fact that a substantial majority of African Americans lived in the South, however, where the schools were totally segregated at that point, African Americans are doubtless still in less segregated schools than they were almost a half century ago.

Table 10
Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by Typical Black or Latino Students, 1970-96

	Blacks	**Latinos**
1970	32.0	43.8
1980	36.2	35.5
1986	36.0	32.9
1991	34.4	31.2
1994	33.9	30.6
1996	32.7	29.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, *Public School Desegregation in the United States*, 1968-1980, 1991–1996, NCES Common Core of Data

For Latinos, however, the conclusion that segregation is worse than at the time of *Brown* is probably more accurate, though we do not have national statistics until more than a decade after *Brown*. The right of Latinos to desegregation was not even recognized by the Supreme Court until 19 years after *Brown* and it was never vigorously enforced. (There had been earlier legal rulings in the 1940s against *de jure* segregation of Latinos in parts of the Southwest, but no

positive duty to desegregate emerged until the Supreme Court's 1973 decision). The steady growth of segregation, since federal data was first collected, has only been interrupted in Colorado and in Texas following busing orders. Elsewhere in the nation, the growth has been very large. In 1970 the average Latino student was in a school with a little over half non-white students (56%), but in 1996 the average Latino was in a 70% non-white school (table 10).

MULTIRACIAL SCHOOLS

Most reports about segregation since 1954 have primarily studied the isolation of black students from white students. During the past two decades there have been a series of reports by Gary Orfield which have also consistently reported Latino segregation statistics, though those received far less attention. Isolation from whites is obviously a very important issues in a predominantly white society, where the major institutions are controlled by whites, but statistics do not provide a full picture of an increasingly multiracial nation. One obvious question is: if non-white children are not in schools with whites, are they in school with children of their own racial group or a mix of non-whites? And as for whites, though they are, on average, in schools, with 81% white classmates, how much exposure do they have to each of the other groups?

It turns out that based on the national average, the average white student is in a school with 8.6% black students, 6.6% Latinos, 2.8% Asians, and 1% American Indians. Whites are the only racial group that attends schools where the overwhelming majority of students are from their own race. Blacks and Latinos attend schools where a little more than half the children are from their own group, on average, while American Indians attend schools that are one-third Indian [excluding Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools]. Asians tend to be in schools that are only about a fifth Asian. Black schools have about a tenth Latino students, on average, while Latino schools have about a ninth African American students. Asians and American Indian public school students are in schools with a much larger number of whites (almost half) than other non-white groups. Both Asians and American Indians attend schools with far more Latinos than blacks, reflecting the racial composition of the West (table 11).

We have many schools emerging with types of interracial and multiracial populations that have received virtually no attention from policy makers or researchers, but will doubtless have a significant impact on relationships between these groups. Many teachers and administrators are already working in kinds of schools neglected in both policy and in research. Many more will be in the future. Students in such schools go to school in highly complex and dynamic environments, and whose complex interactions are poorly understood.

Table 11
Racial Composition of Schools Attended by The Average Student of Each Race, 1996-1997

Average % of Each Race in School	Racial Composition of School Attended by Average :				
	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	Native American Student
% White	81.2	32.6	29.9	46.9	49.2
% Black	8.6	54.5	11.8	12.1	6.7
% Latino	6.6	9.8	52.5	18.5	9.1
% Asian	2.8	2.7	5.0	21.8	2.3
%American Indians	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.7	32.7

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, *Public School Desegregation in the United States*, 1968-1980, 1991 –1996, NCES Common Core of Data

In an increasingly multiracial America we will need to think about the degree to which different groups of student are concentrated in schools with other students who have higher or lower achievement levels. Blacks, Latinos, and American Indians are the groups of students experiencing the greatest educational problems in the schools. Blacks and Latinos, on average, are in schools where 65% of the students are black, Latino, or Indian. Asians, on the other hand, tend to be in schools where 31% of the students are black, Latino, or Indian, and whites attend schools where just 16% are from these groups. Segregation also has implications for the level of exposure an immigrant student has to English-speaking students and to students speaking his/her own language. Asian students are, of course, much less likely to be isolated by language, being in schools where an average of four-fifths of the students are not Asian, thus they interact with many native English speakers. Latino immigrants, however, are much more likely to be in heavily Latino schools with a much higher proportion of native language speakers and a lower share of fluent English speakers. Thus, when compared with Latino and black students, Asians, on average, experience a high degree of integration with groups of students who tend to have higher average achievement levels and less linguistic isolation. There are stark differences, however, within the Asian population. Asians who lived in this country prior to the end of the Vietnam war tended to be wealthier and more educated than the large refugee groups who arrived after the war. So while the average Asian faces a much more integrated picture than the average black or Latino student, there are large numbers of Asian students who live in very segregated high poverty situations. Asian segregation in the nation is growing significantly.

SEGREGATION BY CONCENTRATED POVERTY

Concentrated poverty is strongly linked to many forms of educational inequality. Black and Latino students, on average, attend schools with more than twice as many poor classmates as white students and Asians and American Indian students are about halfway in-between (table 12). Latinos have the highest average percentage of impoverished classmates (46%), compared to 19% for whites.

Table 12
Percent Poor in Schools Attended by the Average White, Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American Student, 1996-1997.

	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Percent Poor	18.7	42.7	46.0	29.3	30.9

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe
Percent poor signifies the proportion of students receiving free or reduced price lunches because of low income.

The 1996 data also show that 47% of U.S schools still had between 0-10% black and Latino students and that only one in 14 (7.7%) of those schools had half or more of their children living in poverty. On the other extreme, 8% of schools were intensely segregated with between 90-100% black and Latino Students. Of those schools, 87% of the children were impoverished. In other words, the students in the segregated minority schools were 11 times more likely to be in schools with concentrated poverty and 92% of white schools did not face this problem. This relationship is absolutely central to explaining the different educational experiences and outcomes of the schools. A great many of the educational characteristics of schools attributed to race are actually related to poverty but the impacts are easily confused since in most metropolitan areas there are few if any concentrated poverty white schools while the vast majority of segregated black or Latino schools experience such poverty and all the educational differences that are associated with it. These issues are often confused, for example, in the

statement by minority critics of desegregation who claim, correctly, that there is nothing magic about sitting next to a white child, but sometimes end up advocating policies that put their children in inferior concentrated poverty schools.

Table 13
Relationship Between Segregation by Race and by Poverty, 1995-96

	Percent Black and Latino Students in Schools									
% Poor in Schools	**0-10%**	**10-20%**	**20-30%**	**30-40%**	**40-50%**	**50-60%**	**60-70%**	**70-80%**	**80-90%**	**90-100%**
0-10%	31.0	21.2	10.2	6.1	5.9	4.7	5.6	4.7	4.5	3.2
20-25%	35.1	37.1	31.1	20.7	11.7	7.1	5.2	3.7	3.2	1.8
25-50%	26.2	32.5	43.8	49.0	45.4	38.2	26.3	15.7	11.4	8.3
50-100%	7.7	9.1	14.9	24.2	37.0	50.0	62.9	75.8	80.8	86.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% of U.S. Schools	47.1	10.8	7.7	6.4	5.6	4.5	3.7	3.2	3.2	7.7

Note: The correlation between the percentage of Black and Latino enrollments and the percentage of free lunch eligible is .66

Note: The exact percentage categories are 0-10, 10.1-20, 20.1-30, 30.1-40, etc... *Source*: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe; Harvard Projection on Desegregation. The actual percentages of poverty are typically underestimated in urban high schools since many poor children in these schools refuse to sign up for free lunches.

Table 14
Relationship Between Segregation by Race and by Poverty, 1995-96 Schools over 90% Black and Latino & over 90% White

% Poor in Schools	**0-10% Black & Latino**	**90-100% Black & Latino**
0-10%	31.0	3.2
50-100%	7.7	86.6
Total	100.0	100.0
% of U.S. Schools	47.1	7.7

Source: This table is derived from Table 13.

CHANGES BY REGION

Often different regions of the country have had differing trends in desegregation. The different legal situations in the South and North and the smaller and more fragmented districts in parts of the country tend to produce differing outcomes. From the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, the gains in desegregation were by far the largest in the 17 Southern and Border states with a history of segregation laws, because the enforcement effort was focused there. In examining the trends between 1991 and 1996, however, a historic shift had occurred and these were the regions with the largest increases in segregation.

Table 15
Segregation of Black Students by Region, 1991-92 and 1996-97

	1991-92		
	% of Blacks in 50-100% Minority Schools	% of Blacks in 90-100% Minority Schools	% Whites in School of Typical Black
South	60.8	26.6	38.3
Border	59.3	33.2	37.3
Northeast	76.2	50.1	26.1
Midwest	69.9	39.4	31.7
West	69.7	26.4	34.5
U.S. Total	66.0	33.9	34.4

	1996-97		
	% of Blacks in 50-100% Minority Schools	% of Blacks in 90-100% Minority Schools	% Whites in School of Typical Black
South	65.3	27.9	35.8
Border	63.2	37.3	34.5
Northeast	77.3	50.5	25.2
Midwest	72.0	43.4	29.5
West	73.5	27.5	32.3
U.S. Total	68.8	35.0	32.6

Source: 1991-92 & 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

The recent increase in segregation for black students was the sharpest in the regions, which have historically been the most integrated parts of the U.S. since 1970, and have had the largest percentage of black students in their enrollment. Statistics for African American segregation show that it declined substantially in a number of states with large black enrollments during the busing era of the 1970s, but that it began to increase significantly since 1980. The largest declines in segregation came in Delaware and Kentucky which both implemented city-suburban desegregation plans in the big metropolitan area where most of their minority students lived (Wilmington and Louisville). These two states did not have large percentages of minority populations, were rich states, and also happen to be the two most suburban states in the country. Missouri, where the other significant city-suburban desegregation plan was implemented in metropolitan St. Louis, also experienced a very substantial drop in the level of black segregation. Ohio, which had new orders in its major cities also had a major decline, as did Wisconsin after the implementation of the Milwaukee desegregation plan. The other state with a significant decline was Oklahoma where Oklahoma City desegregated. In Connecticut and New Jersey, blacks and Latinos tended to be left behind in highly segregated, very poor and seriously declining central cities surrounded by wealthy suburban rings. In both of these states, metropolitan areas are fragmented into large numbers of small districts. After the Supreme Court's decision in 1974 blocking city-suburban desegregation, little additional progress took place in many states.

Between 1980 and 1996, Indiana, which implemented city-suburban desegregation in 1980 showed the only large drop in segregation. The Indianapolis plan began to be phased out in 1998 when the Justice Department decided to settle the case under a plan that provided no long-

term school desegregation. Missouri was the only other state to continue to increase integrated education significantly. The St. Louis case was settled in 1998 under an unusual plan that will continue substantial desegregation for another decade but then phase it out.

Virtually all the other states with substantial black enrollments show rising segregation since 1980. The largest increases came in Rhode Island (20%), Wisconsin (13%), Florida (12%), Oklahoma (12%), Maryland (9%), Delaware (9%), and Massachusetts (9%) (table 16).

Table 16
Changing Patterns of Black Segregation by State, 1970-1996
Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by Typical Black Students

	1970	1980	1996	Change 1970-80	Change 1980-96
Alabama	32.7	37.9	31.9	5.2	-6.0
Arkansas	42.5	46.5	40.3	4.0	-6.2
California	25.6	27.7	25.0	2.1	-2.7
Connecticut	44.1	40.3	34.0	-3.8	-6.3
Delaware	46.5	68.5	59.8	22.0	-8.7
Florida	43.2	50.6	38.4	7.4	-12 2
Georgia	35.1	38.3	33.2	3.2	-5.1
Illinois	14.6	19.0	19.8	4.4	0.8
Indiana	31.7	38.7	46.0	7.0	7.3
Kentucky	49.4	74.3	69.1	24.9	-5.2
Louisiana	30.8	32.8	29.0	2.0	-3.8
Maryland	30.3	35.4	26.0	5.1	-9.4
Massachusetts	47.5	50.4	41.9	2.9	-8.5
Michigan	21.9	22.5	19.8	0.6	-2.7
Mississippi	29.6	29.2	27.7	-0.4	-1.5
Missouri	21.4	34.1	37.7	12.7	3.6
New Jersey	32.4	26.4	25.2	-6.0	-1.2
New York	29.2	23.0	18.7	-6.2	-4.3
North Carolina	49.0	54.0	47.2	5.0	-6.8
Ohio	28.4	43.2	36.1	14.8	-7.1
Oklahoma	42.1	57.6	45.9	15.5	-11.7
Pennsylvania	27.8	29.3	30.4	1.5	1.1
Rhode Island	NA	65.8	46.3	NA	-19.5
South Carolina	41.2	42.7	40.5	1.5	-2.2
Tennessee	29.2	38.0	33.5	8.8	-4.5
Texas	30.7	35.2	31.4	4.5	-3.8
Virginia	41.5	47.4	44.2	5.9	-3.2
Wisconsin	25.7	44.5	32.0	18.8	-12.5

Source: DBS Corp.,1982;1987;1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

The most segregated states in the U.S. for black students have included Michigan, Illinois and New York for many years. New Jersey has traditionally been in the top four most segregated states, but that ranking slipped a little, though the state still ranks 5th on two of the three measures. Examining segregation in 1996 (table 16), it is apparent that California and Maryland have moved into the top levels of black segregation in the country even though

California has less than a tenth black students. At the peak of Southern desegregation, there were no southern states near the top of the list. Now we see four of the states of the old South—Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas—as among the most segregated states (table 17).

AFRICAN AMERICAN SEGREGATION BY STATE

Table 17
Most Segregated States* for Black Students on Three Measures of Segregation, 1996-97

Rank	% In Majority White Schools		Rank	% in 90-100% Minority Schools		Rank	% Whites in School of Typical Black	
1	New York	14.0	1	Michigan	61.6	1	New York	18.7
2	California	15.8	2	Illinois	60.4	2	Michigan	19.8
3	Michigan	17.5	3	New York	58.2	3	Illinois	19.8
4	Illinois	19.5	4	New Jersey	55.2	4	California	25.0
5	Hawaii	22.7	5	Maryland	47.5	5	New Jersey	25.2
6	Mississippi	24.1	6	Pennsylvania	45.9	6	Maryland	26.0
7	Maryland	24.8	7	Alabama	40.5	7	Mississippi	27.7
8	Louisiana	25.8	8	Mississippi	39.2	8	Louisiana	29.0
9	New Jersey	25.9	9	Louisiana	38.9	9	Pennsylvania	30.4
10	Wisconsin	26.9	10	Tennessee	38.9	10	Texas	31.4
11	Texas	29.0	11	California	34.9	11	Alabama	31.9
12	Pennsylvania	30.4	12	Texas	33.7	12	Wisconsin	32.0
13	Georgia	30.5	13	Connecticut	33.7	13	Georgia	33.2
14	Ohio	31.3	14	Georgia	31.0	14	Tennessee	33.5
15	Connecticut	32.4	15	Wisconsin	30.6	15	Connecticut	34.0
16	Alabama	33.0	16	Florida	27.2	16	Hawaii	34.6
17	Missouri	34.2	17	Missouri	26.8	17	Ohio	36.1
18	Tennessee	34.3	18	Ohio	26.7	18	Missouri	37.7
19	Arkansas	35.7	19	Indiana	21.9	19	Florida	38.4
20	Massachusetts	36.6	20	Massachusetts	19.7	20	Arkansas	40.3

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe; Harvard Projection on School Desegregation
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Some states with very low black enrollment still are highly segregated. There are 18 states with less than 6% black enrollment. Of these states, Minnesota has the highest proportion of its black students in majority non-white schools , closely followed by three states in the Southwest—Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico, all of which have large Latino enrollments and much larger total minority enrollments. In addition to Minnesota there is a surprising level of segregation in the Pacific Northwest. Oregon has only 2.5% black students and Washington has only 4.8% but in each state nearly a third of those students are in majority non-white schools. Minnesota also reported that by 1996, 6.8% of its black students were in intensely segregated schools with more than nine-tenths minority students. The biggest cities in both Washington and Minnesota have recently voted to dissolve their desegregation plans and return to segregated neighborhood schools, so these levels of isolation will certainly rise in the future. One other state deserving attention is Utah. With the lowest percent of black students in the nation, 7/10 of 1%, Utah has managed to put an eighth of these students in predominantly minority schools.

Table 18. Segregation of Black Students in States with Less than Six Percent Black

Public School Enrollment, 1996-97

	% Black	% in 50-100% Minority Schools	% in 90-100% Minority Schools
Alaska	4.7	18.0	0.1
Arizona	4.3	55.1	13.4
Colorado	5.5	55.2	11.2
Iowa	3.4	9.1	0.0
Maine	0.9	0.3	0.3
Minnesota	5.2	57.1	6.8
Montana	0.5	2.1	0.0
North Dakota	0.9	0.5	0.3
Nebraska	6.0	37.9	0.0
New Hampshire	1.0	0.0	0.0
New Mexico	2.4	56.4	7.5
Oregon	2.5	31.6	0.0
South Dakota	1.0	5.3	0.2
Utah	0.7	12.2	0.3
Vermont	0.8	0.0	0.0
Washington	4.8	30.9	1.1
West Virginia	4.0	11.4	0.0
Wyoming	1.2	3.4	0.0

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.

Large Increases in Segregation

Some states show dramatic declines in integration in the last five year period, particularly Maryland and Rhode Island. Others, where major desegregation plans have been ended or are being phased out since 1996 will probably show similar increases in the 1998 or 2000 data. In Maryland there has been a very large black migration to the suburbs and segregation has risen substantially in the two largest Washington suburban counties, Prince George's and Montgomery. Prince George's has recently terminated its desegregation plan so there should be further intensification there. Montgomery had a very modest voluntary plan that has not forestalled increased segregation of both blacks and Latinos and it has been sued because of a policy attempting to integrate magnet programs.[6] Baltimore schools have been overwhelmingly black for many years.

Latino Segregation by Region

Latino segregation has been increasing ever since data was first collected in the 1960s but the issue has never received much attention since the great increase came after the civil rights era. Nearly twenty years after *Brown* the Supreme Court recognized in the 1973 Denver decision that Latinos had faced a history of segregation and were entitled to a desegregated education. There never was a significant effort to enforce this right, however, and substantial desegregation for Latinos occurred in only a few places. Latino students are significantly more segregated than African Americans and segregation has been rapidly growing in the states where they have the largest enrollments.

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[6] Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of *Brown v. Board of Education*, edited by Gary Orfield, Susan Eaton, and the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, The New Press: New York, 1996. Ch. 8, 10.

Segregation leaves Latino students in schools with high levels of concentrated poverty, low average levels of competition and low levels of college enrollment. Latino students have by far the highest dropout rates of any major group in American schools and are experiencing declining access to college in an era in which post-secondary education is absolutely crucial for good jobs. Part of the reason is that they attend schools with far higher concentrations of poverty than other racial and ethnic groups and these schools tend to have very low performance levels, fewer teachers teaching in their subject areas, and many other forms of inequality. The Northeast continues to be the most segregated region for Latinos, largely reflecting the situation in the consolidated New York metropolitan area.

The South and the West are just behind the Northeast, which was far more segregated than other regions in the past. The West, where Latinos are the dominant minority group has a substantial increase in segregation and now has 77% of Latino children in predominantly minority schools. A very substantial share of Latinos are now attending intensely segregated (90-100% non-white) schools—46% in the Northeast, 38% in the South, and 33% in the West, where this level of segregation was uncommon two decades ago.

Table 19
Latino Segregation by Region, 1996-97

	% in 50-100% Minority Schools	% in 90-100% Minority Schools	% Whites in School of Typical Latino
South	75.9	38.3	28.3
Border	43.5	12.6	51.8
Northeast	78.2	46.0	26.1
Midwest	54.0	22.3	45.5
West	77.1	33.0	29.2
U.S. Total	74.8	35.4	29.9

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data, Harvard Project on Desegregation.

STATE LEVEL CHANGES IN LATINO SEGREGATION

The scope of the changes in Latino segregation has not been widely recognized because Latinos are concentrated in the Southwest, where they play a very large and historic role in the society. In the Washington, D.C. area and many of the major regions of the East, the Latino presence is much lower. There are also large numbers in Florida, New York, New Jersey and Illinois, but these populations tend to be highly concentrated in the largest metropolitan areas and have much less visibility across the state.

Texas has a history of much more rigid segregation of Latinos than does California and was the location for most of the civil rights cases against segregated Latino schools. In 1970, Latino children attended California schools with an average of 54% white enrollment. But by 1996, they were in schools where the average white enrollment had plummeted to 23.5% and 76.5% of the students were "minorities." Texas and Colorado Latinos actually had an increase in integration from 1970 to 1980, probably from busing orders, but Texas was one of the first states to end its urban desegregation plans and Latinos were more segregated by 1996 than they had been 26 years earlier. Colorado Latinos were far more integrated than those in the other Southwestern states through 1996, but since then the federal court has ended desegregation in Denver and state law forbids busing for desegregation without a federal court order. New York, on the other extreme, had consistently high segregation throughout the entire period.

Table 20
Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by a Typical Latino Student, 1970-1996

	1970	1980	1996	Change 1970-80	Change 1980-1996
Arizona	45.5	43.5	36.4	-2.0	-7.1
California	54.4	35.9	23.5	-18.5	-12.4
Colorado	56.8	59.0	51.2	2.2	-7.8
Connecticut	47.8	37.9	35.1	-9.9	-2.8
Florida	46.4	35.3	33.9	-11.1	-1.4
Massachusetts	NA	52.6	42.2	NA	-10.4
Nevada	83.7	75.3	50.6	-8.4	-24.7
New Jersey	38.2	29.6	29.3	-8.6	-0.3
New Mexico	36.9	32.6	30.2	-4.3	-2.4
New York	21.6	20.8	18.1	-0.8	-2.7
Texas	31.1	35.1	24.2	4.0	-10.9
Wyoming	75.3	82.8	83.0	7.5	0.2

Source: DBS Corp.,1982;1987;1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Since federal data was first collected, New York has been the most segregated state for Latino students on all three measures used in this study. The typical Latino student attends a school where less than a fifth of the students are white and only one-eighth are in majority white schools in a state with a large majority of white students. New York has traditionally had much higher levels of residential segregation for Latinos than other states. California, which was much less segregated a quarter century ago, is rapidly approaching the New York level of hypersegregation, as is Texas. Predominantly Puerto Rican and Dominican areas tend to show very high segregation levels and New Jersey and Connecticut's cities fall into this pattern. The Illinois pattern largely reflects the extreme segregation of the Chicago public schools and the rapid increase of the Latino community there. This brings us back to the only state with a high level of Latino enrollment that does not show severe segregation in 1996 – Colorado. The Denver case was the one in which the right of Latinos to desegregated education was recognized by the Supreme Court. In 1997, however, the Federal District Court approved permitting Denver to return to segregated neighborhood schools.

Table 21
State Rankings in the Segregation of Latino Students by Three Measures, 1996-97

Rank	% of Latinos in Majority White Schools		Rank	% of Latinos in 90-100% Minority Schools		Rank	% Whites in School of Typical Latino	
1	New York	12.8	1	New York	58.6	1	New York	18.1
2	California	15.5	2	Texas	44.1	2	California	23.5
3	Texas	18.7	3	New Jersey	43.2	3	Texas	24.2
4	New Mexico	20.5	4	California	40.0	4	New Jersey	29.3
5	Rhode Island	24.4	5	Illinois	35.7	5	Illinois	30.1
6	Illinois	26.7	6	Connecticut	32.3	6	New Mexico	30.2
7	New Jersey	27.9	7	Florida	28.4	7	Florida	33.9
8	Arizona	31.4	8	Pennsylvania	26.1	8	Connecticut	35.1
9	Connecticut	31.5	9	New Mexico	19.7	9	Rhode Island	36.2

10	Florida	32.0	10	Arizona	19.4	10	Arizona	36.4
11	Massachusetts	37.5	11	Maryland	16.9	11	Maryland	41.3
12	Pennsylvania	38.2	12	Indiana	14.0	12	Pennsylvania	41.5
13	Maryland	39.7	13	Massachusetts	13.7	13	Massachusetts	42.2
14	Nevada	50.5	14	Tennessee	11.6	14	Louisiana	50.5
15	Louisiana	51.1	15	Wisconsin	11.3	15	Nevada	50.6
16	Georgia	52.9	16	Rhode Island	10.3	16	Colorado	51.2
17	Colorado	54.1	17	Louisiana	9.2	17	Georgia	51.4
18	Virginia	54.9	18	Colorado	7.6	18	Virginia	52.0
19	Wisconsin	57.2	19	Mississippi	6.9	19	Delaware	55.5
20	Washington	60.9	20	Georgia	6.8	20	Wisconsin	55.6

Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Those examining the causes of the increase in Latino segregation may well ask whether or not it is simply a reflection of the rising share of Latinos in the school age population and the declining share of whites, since there never were many desegregation plans aimed at ending Latino segregation. The answer to this question is yes, a large share of the increase is demographic and full desegregation in majority white schools is no longer a possibility in some states. A new analysis for the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics shows that much of the decline in desegregation could be accounted for by the growth of the Latino enrollment between 1987 and 1996.[7] It is important to recall, however, that whites remain highly segregated in the regions of rapid Latino enrollment growth, which would not be expected if this were merely due to demographic changes acting uniformly across districts.

SEGREGATION BY COMMUNITY TYPES

Since the early days of urban desegregation many critics have claimed that desegregation was impossible, that white flight from desegregation plans made them highly unstable, and that the whole thing was an exercise in futility. The fact that most national opinion leaders are located in two great metropolitan areas means that the experiences of Washington D.C. and New York City are often treated as if they are typical of the country, when nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the 1996 data shows that 55% of blacks and 67% of Latino students lived in large metropolitan areas and another fourth of the population of each group lived in small metropolitan areas. Those who lived in rural areas, in towns, and in small communities were by far the most integrated. Blacks and Latinos in the central cities of large metropolitan areas, on the other hand were by far the most segregated. In a society which is now dominated by the suburbs, it is extremely interesting that 30% of Latinos and 20% of blacks are now enrolled in the suburban schools of large metropolitan areas, and another 6% attend school in the suburbs of smaller metropolitan areas. The population growth of minority students is going to be overwhelmingly suburban if the existing trends continue. One of the most important questions for the next generation will be whether or not the suburbs will repeat the experience of the central cities or learn how to operate stable integrated schools. Table 22 shows that suburban blacks and Latinos in large metropolitan areas are already attending schools that have an average non-white enrollment of 60% for blacks and 64% for Latinos, though this is twice the level of contact with whites that occurs in central city schools. Suburban whites in the large metro areas,

[7] "Racial/Ethnic Isolation Indicator," forthcoming in *The Condition of Education 1999*, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1999.

on the other hand, attend schools with an average of 6.8% blacks and 7.4% Latinos, less than half the level of central city whites. The suburbs of small metropolitan areas are considerably more integrated for blacks, but not for Latinos (table 22).

Table 22
Exposure of Blacks, Latinos, and Whites to Students of Other Groups, by Size of Community, 1996-97

Community Type	Percent of Black or Latino Students Enrolled by Community Type		% White in School of Typical Black or Latino		% Black and Latino in School of Typical White	
	Black	Latino	Black	Latinos	Black	Latinos
Large Metro						
City	35.1	36.5	15.3	16.2	18.6	17.0
Suburbs	20.3	30.2	40.4	35.5	6.8	7.4
Small Metro						
City	21.7	16.6	36.5	35.0	14.0	8.5
Suburbs	5.8	5.6	55.6	37.6	7.1	3.9
Towns						
25,000+	1.3	1.1	48.7	45.1	9.1	6.0
Small	8.8	6.0	45.7	44.7	8.3	4.5
Rural	6.9	3.9	46.7	56.4	4.5	2.5
US Total/Avg.	100	100	NA	NA	NA	NA

Note: Large metro areas have cities with populations of 250,000 or greater; small metro areas have cities with populations of less than 250,000.
Source: 1996-97 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe; Harvard Projection on Desegregation

POLICY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The areas most affected by changes in desegregation law have been the Southern and Border states, where civil rights enforcement beginning in the mid-1960s created wide-scale integration of black students. The impact of civil rights enforcement was greatest there for three reasons. First, the previous segregation was by far the most extreme, a true apartheid system under state segregation laws that had been fiercely defended by state and local officials and which had changed only slowly until Congress acted in 1964. Second, lower courts developed desegregation policies that were easy to enforce in the formerly de jure states that had explicit segregation laws. But in other states, where segregation had been achieved not through such explicit laws, it required more effort to document and pinpoint discrimination. Third, black students in the South were far less likely than their northern counterparts to be concentrated in big cities and the South's school district organization combines cities and suburbs in a metropolitan area. This is vastly different than other regions, which fragment their metropolitan communities into small segregated pieces. As late as 1964, 98 percent of Southern black students and nearly all Southern white students had attended segregated schools. The enactment of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the active enforcement of that law by the Johnson Administration, and major Supreme Court decisions tightening desegregation requirements made the South the most integrated region in the country by 1970. The Supreme Court decisions that required desegregation plans to end segregated schools by student reassignment and busing produced huge changes.

Currently the school districts terminating desegregation or in court over the issue are some of the largest metropolitan districts in the South and most of the big cities with outstanding court orders outside the South. The only offsetting force is the rapid suburbanization of the black and Latino middle class. Whether or not this will produce lasting integration or merely a vast spread of suburban segregation is one of the great questions of this period. Unfortunately, there is no policy and no assistance for these racially-changing communities and an almost total absence of discussion among school districts about changes that will require regional responses if we want to avoid the sorry experiences of the intense segregation in the central cities. No such discussions are taking place.

The U.S. is more multiracial than ever before and is in the midst of a demographic transformation. It makes sense, then, that we should be working to understand and foster successful multiracial schools. The states that have already become predominantly minority have not launched any initiatives to accommodate the changes. In California, for example, instead of a focused discussion about multiracial community-building, the loss of the white majority spawned a sweeping attack on Latinos' civil rights and a termination of virtually all the state's desegregation plans. Texas has also been aggressive in ending urban desegregation plans. Both Texas and California have eliminated affirmative action at the college level. Texas has imposed test requirements for high school graduation and had the nation's second highest high school dropout rate in 1996. Both states have enacted increasingly demanding testing systems while concentrating more and more of their urban students in highly segregated schools. The new white minority in the schools, which will eventually become a white minority in politics, can only hope that the non-white populations show greater regard for access by minority whites than white leaders did for them.

The Clinton Administration has presided over a period of substantial and continuous increase in segregation without any initiatives to offset these trends. No significant litigation has been filed, the Justice Department agreed to a very weak settlement of its only metropolitan desegregation case, there has been no effort to restore the desegregation aid program that the Reagan administration cancelled and no new major research on race relations, segregation, or desegregation in American schools. The President's race initiative came up with no significant recommendations that would address increasing segregation. Although the Congressionally-mandated study of Title I showed that Title I programs work very poorly in concentrated poverty schools, there has never been any proposal to reduce concentrations of poverty.

The current Administration affirms its support for integrated schools but has no set of policies that would foster or support them, no research program to learn how to help them work better, no aggressive legal strategy to fight against segregation and no critical discussion of the impact of the current pro-segregation court decisions on the country and no plan to help stabilize integration in hundreds of racially changing suburban school districts. During the past year, the Justice Department agreed to abandonment of city-suburban desegregation opportunities in Indianapolis—the only midwestern metropolitan area with substantial desegregation—without so much as a trial. The administration's policies and seeming lack of concern about segregation implies an acceptance of a "separate but equal" strategy in public schools. Though the Clinton Administration is interested in interracial colleges through support of affirmative action, if more and more minority students are educated in less competitive schools, and the administration's favored policies against "social promotion" and in favor of high stakes tests are enacted, these minority students will not be ready to succeed in college. This is the first Democratic administration in 40 years that has had no program for school integration. Previous administrations took positive actions. For example:

Kennedy: Proposed major new civil rights laws greatly expanding Federal enforcement power against segregated schools.

Johnson: Enacted laws and enforced them more vigorously than any previous or subsequent administration. Brought the South from almost total segregation to give it the nation's most desegregated schools.

Nixon: Though opposed to busing, supported federal desegregation aid program to support successful operation of interracial schools enacted in 1972. Research showed clear benefits until the program was ended by Reagan Administration.

Carter: Expanded and greatly improved desegregation aid program and research. Actively resisted rollback of urban desegregation and initiated combined housing and school desegregation strategies.

After 12 years of intense and focused opposition to desegregation orders under Presidents Reagan and Bush and successful confirmation of hundreds of conservative federal judges, the law now is much closer to Reagan's vision than to that of the Warren and Burger Courts. Mandatory desegregation orders are being dissolved on a large scale and voluntary ones are being challenged in many courts. There has been no significant countervailing intellectual, political or legal force from the Clinton Administration that might reverse trends.

In order to buck these trends there must be an alternative to the current policies. Some priorities for avoiding massive resegregation and improving interracial schools would include:

1) active discussion and leadership on this issue by the President and Education and Justice Department leaders, who would explain trends and consequences and discuss constitutional issues. Initiatives of this sort by the Reagan Administration, together with a systematic re-staffing of the courts, have produced the current legal changes that exacerbate segregation.

2) leadership by the Justice Department and the Office for Civil Rights in defining standards for "unitary status" which specify how the various legal requirements of desegregation should be factually examined. Also important is the use of educational expertise to help the courts, which are often making quick and superficial judgments of complex issues, related to schools.

3) aggressive defense of remaining court orders.

4) requirements that charter schools receiving federal funds are desegregated in conformity with local and state desegregation plans and policies.

5) incentives in Title I plans that facilitate and encourage the transfer of low income students from concentrated-poverty low-achieving schools to schools that are more diverse. This is logical, since Title I research shows little success of Title I programs in concentrated poverty schools, which are usually segregated minority schools.

6) a policy of strong support for diverse suburban communities by the Education, HUD, and Justice Departments. This would include research on successful local practices that create integrated communities and vigorous enforcement against housing market and lending practices that spread segregation.

7) proposing a program of aid for human relations, staff training, and educational reform in the nation's thousands of multiracial schools. Such a program existed until the Reagan Administration eliminated it.

8) fill the vacant federal judgeships.

We are floating back toward an educational pattern that has never in the nation's history produced equal and successful schools. There is no good evidence that it will work now. The 1990s have actually seen the once shrinking racial achievement gaps begin to widen again on some tests. It is clear, then, that the Administration's favored educational policies in place are not likely to produce equal segregated schools. Reversing the trends of intensifying segregation and inequality will be difficult, but the costs of passively accepting them are likely to be immense.

Figure 1.

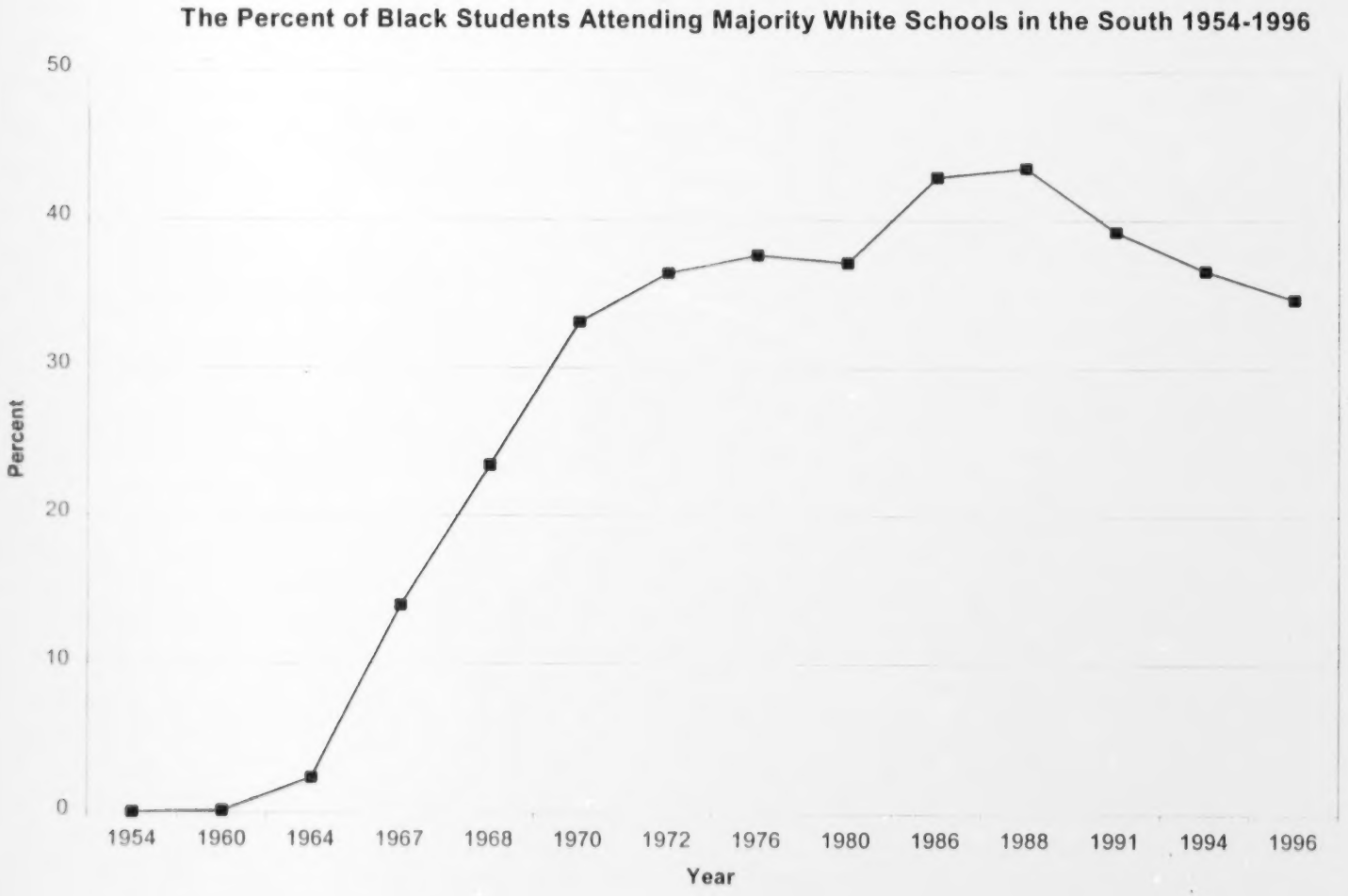

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Figure 2.

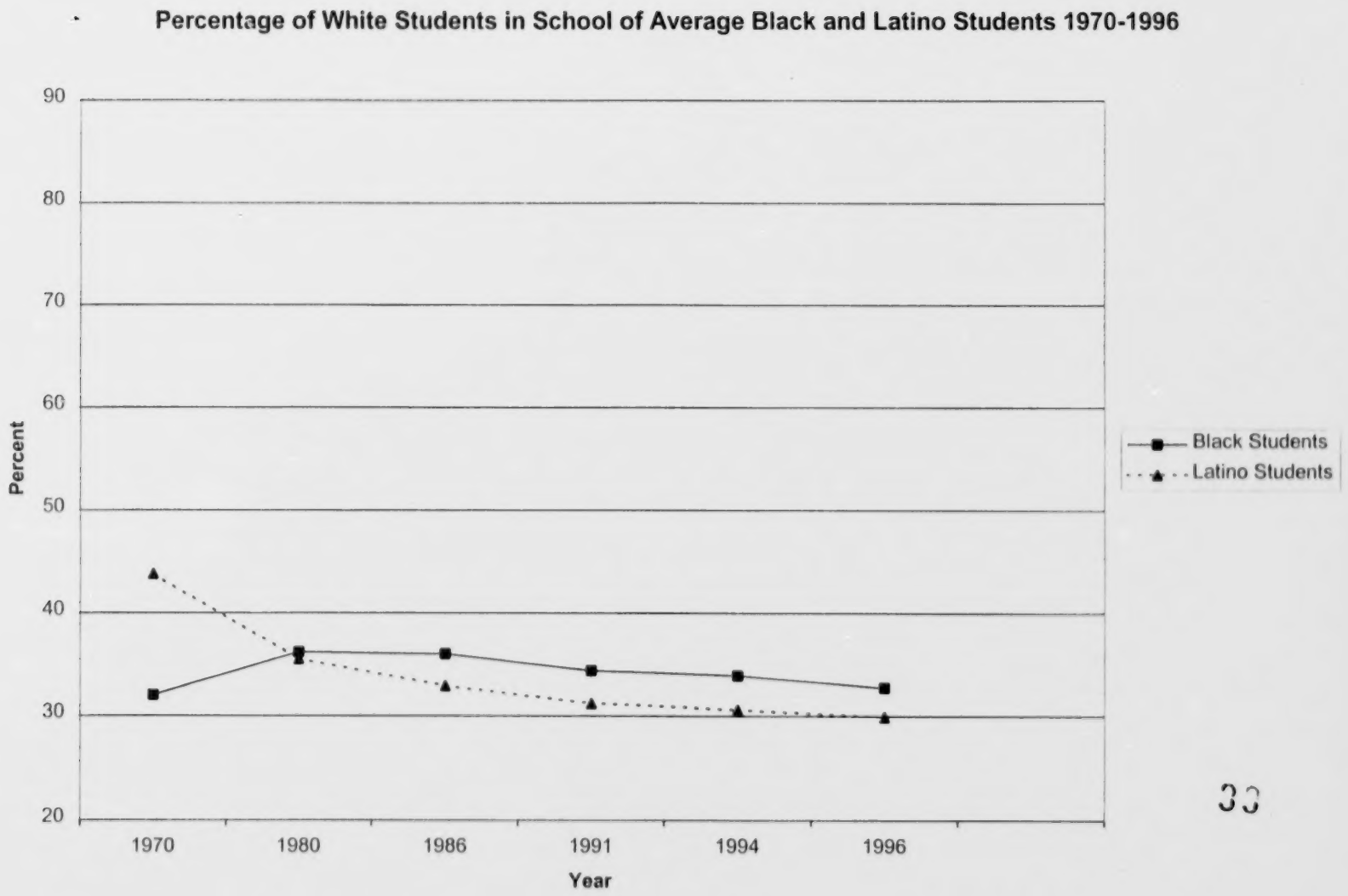

Percentage of White Students in School of Average Black and Latino Students 1970-1996
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
Percent
1970
1980
1986
1991
1994
1996
Year
Black Students
Latino Students

Figure 3.

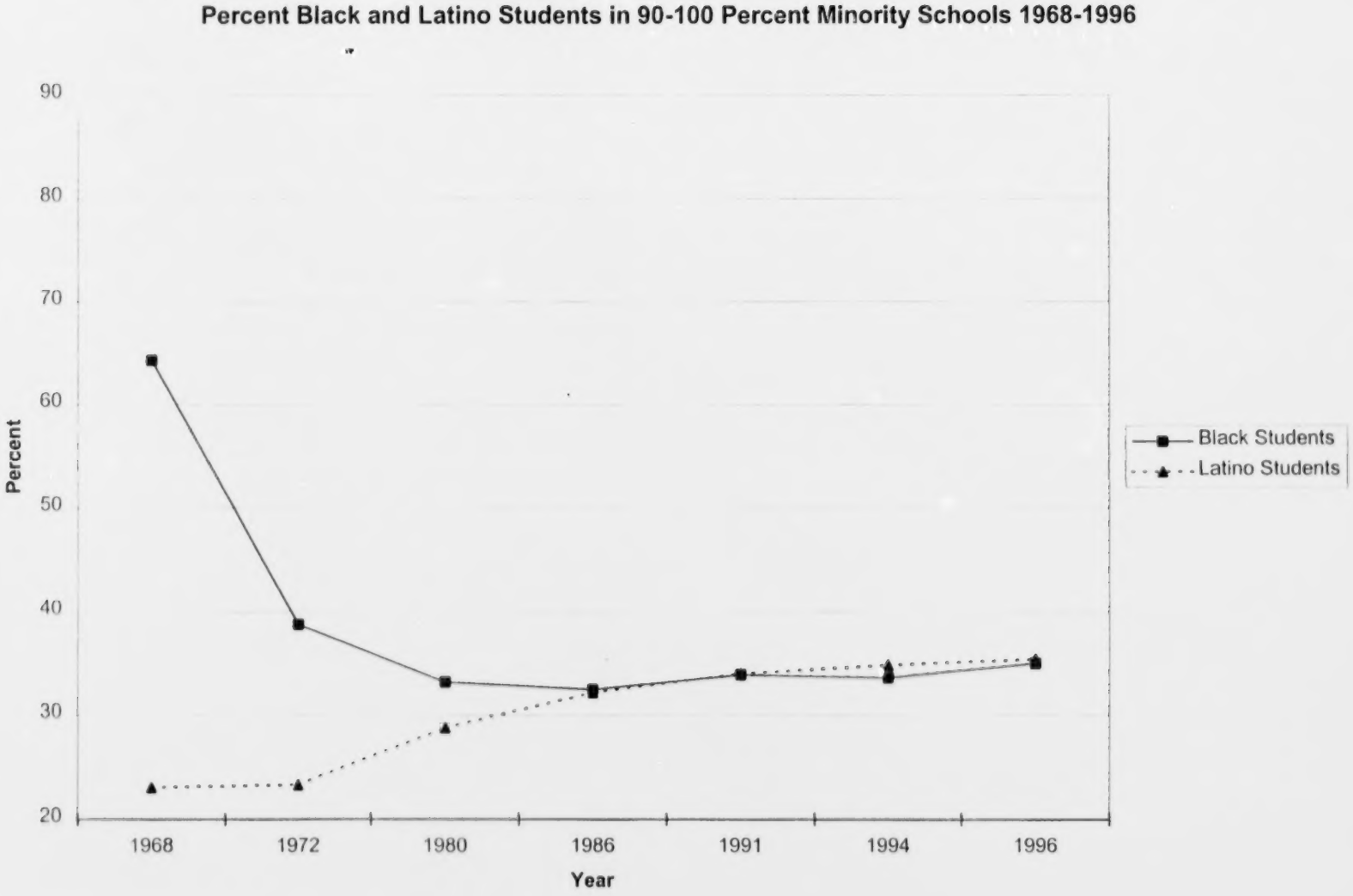
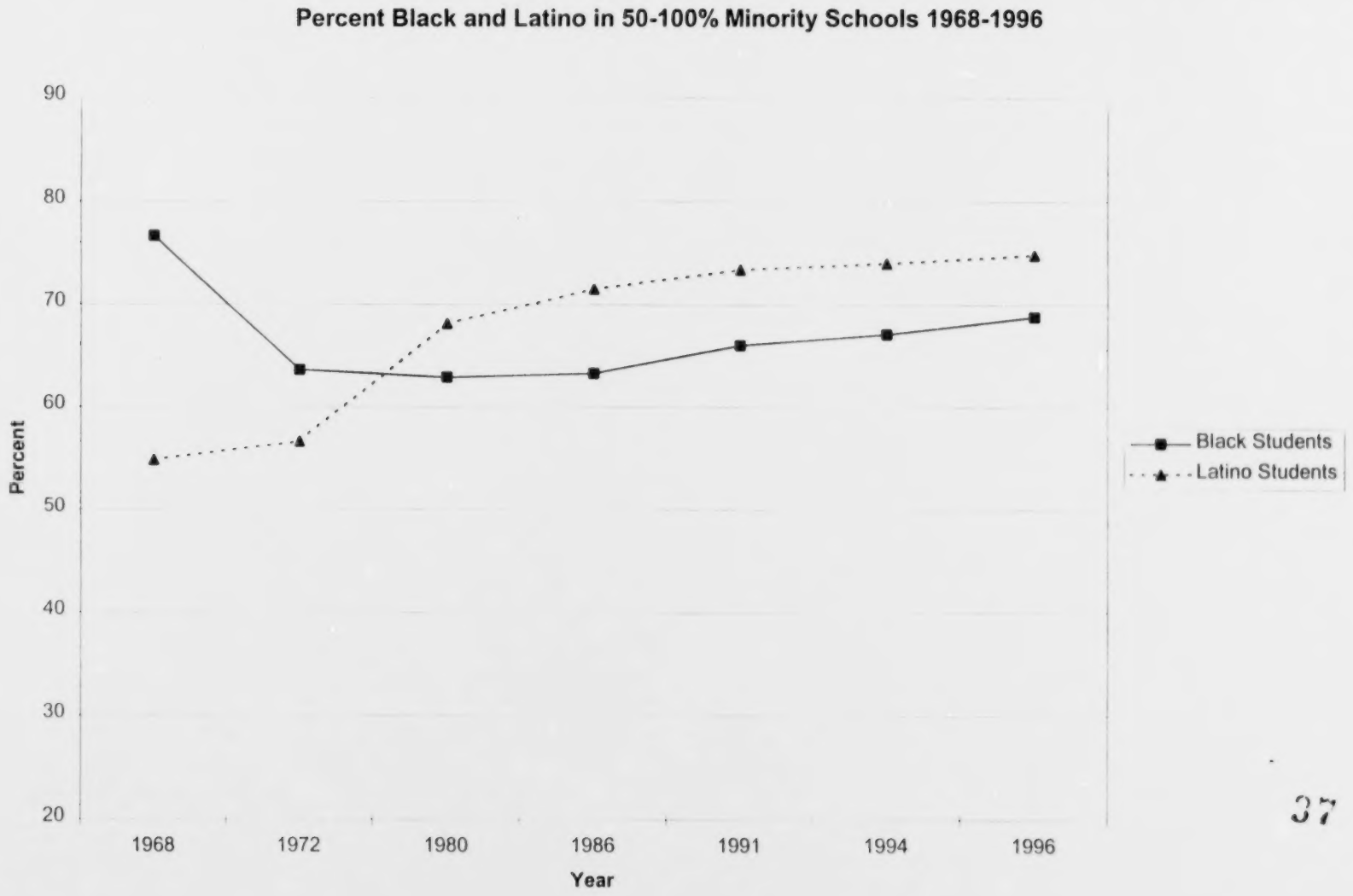

Percent Black and Latino Students in 90-100 Percent Minority Schools 1968-1996
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
Percent
1968
1972
1980
1986
1991
1994
1996
Year
Black Students
Latino Students

Figure 4.


Percent Black and Latino in 50-100% Minority Schools 1968-1996
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
Percent
1968
1972
1980
1986
1991
1994
1996
Year
Black Students
Latino Students